



Early Journal Content on JSTOR, Free to Anyone in the World

This article is one of nearly 500,000 scholarly works digitized and made freely available to everyone in the world by JSTOR.

Known as the Early Journal Content, this set of works include research articles, news, letters, and other writings published in more than 200 of the oldest leading academic journals. The works date from the mid-seventeenth to the early twentieth centuries.

We encourage people to read and share the Early Journal Content openly and to tell others that this resource exists. People may post this content online or redistribute in any way for non-commercial purposes.

Read more about Early Journal Content at <http://about.jstor.org/participate-jstor/individuals/early-journal-content>.

JSTOR is a digital library of academic journals, books, and primary source objects. JSTOR helps people discover, use, and build upon a wide range of content through a powerful research and teaching platform, and preserves this content for future generations. JSTOR is part of ITHAKA, a not-for-profit organization that also includes Ithaka S+R and Portico. For more information about JSTOR, please contact support@jstor.org.

LETTERS TO THE EDITOR



[The Editor is not responsible for opinions expressed in this Department.]

TO THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING.

DEAR EDITOR: The days of our peace and security as a profession seem to be nearly over, and our troubles are about to begin. Resistance to quackery in nursing will soon be forced upon us, and we shall be driven into a struggle similar to that which the medical profession was driven into years ago against quackery in medicine.

Not long ago mention was made editorially of a so-called School of Nursing, the methods of which we cannot but consider in every way injurious to our highest standards.

Now, I feel impelled to appeal to nurses throughout the country to inform themselves as to the menace of that and similar institutions purporting to give training in nursing, and to warn them against indifference and lack of information as to what such movements mean.

The subject is again brought forcibly to my notice by an advertising pamphlet, quite handsomely presented, entitled "Chicago College for Nurses." It announces the second annual report, and is most imposing in a long array of directors (prominent men and physicians), a Board of Advisers (again prominent men, clergy, and philanthropists), and a faculty of twenty-four, among whom I notice a professor of hospital nursing, a professor of general nursing (both women; can they be graduates of a thoroughgoing school for nurses?), and a professor of diet and invalid cookery. (What a disgust one feels, incidentally, for the title of "professor"!)

The announcement recites the aims of the college: *i.e.*, to teach nursing in the same way in which medicine is taught; to arrange a college course; to eliminate all unnecessary drudgery (by this, it would seem, is meant all the innumerable little cares needed by the sick to make them clean, comfortable, and secure, and all the vigilant labors essential to keep their surroundings sanitary and wholesome), and to teach nursing in an up-to-date, scientific manner. Not alone for the professional nurse is the course intended, but for the wife, mother, and female members of the family.

The plan of education is to teach by didactic lectures, clinics, and bedside practice; this latter, if in hospital wards, is not so stated; probably, again, the long-suffering poor are the victims, as mention is made of churches and lodges sending for nurses. The full course consists of two terms of six months each (one year's training, notice, when in all our hospitals a steady advance is going on from a two-years' towards a three-years' course).

Qualifications are,—a certificate of good moral character; evidences of a good English common-school education; age over seventeen years. (Oh, the fine ethics shown in thus inveigling girls of an age too immature to allow their judgment or their general knowledge of the world to have developed sufficiently to be a protection against specious offers!)

Tuition fees are fifty dollars for each six months, with five dollars more for the diploma.

In the outline of study I find, in the first year, four hours a week given to anatomy and physiology and two hours a week (not a day, but a *week*) to nursing, including bedmaking, moving of patients, giving alcohol baths and sweats, the use of the ice-cap and coils, the general care of the ward and patient, and the care of the operating-room!

One hour a week is devoted to the study of hygiene; three hours a week to materia medica, in which the pupil is taught how to dispense remedies. (Is this allowed under the laws regulating the practice of pharmacy, or are there none?)

In the second year diseases of children are taught in one hour a week. Fevers and infectious diseases also in one hour a week. Surgical nursing, including operating-room technique, in four hours a week.

Massage, electricity, and osteopathy (how is osteopathy regarded by the American Medical Association?) are taught in one hour a week.

Medical jurisprudence is taught so that nurses may draft wills, contracts, and any legal papers in sickness and emergencies. (Have lawyers no protective regulations against this sort of instruction?)

One hour a week is devoted to obstetrics. Among the ten subjects taught in the second year I am not at all surprised to find practical points in nursing bringing up the tail end, with three hours a week.

Dear Editor, the indignation which I frankly admit I feel unboundedly in reading over this prospectus is directed against the assumption that this is an education in *nursing*. This college is *not* teaching nursing. It is turning out a sort of under assistant for the doctor. It is training women to do junior medical students' work, or attendants' work, simply and solely that they may be convenient lackeys to save the doctors trouble and to wait upon them (and incidentally to bring in fees), without the slightest regard, or even thought, for the patient, or for the whole vast and intricate problem of the need of wise, gentle, skilful guardianship and care for the sick and suffering patient as he himself would see and crave it.

"From our view-point," says the circular, "our course is almost perfection. There are laboratories, microscopes, incubators, chemicals and all necessary paraphernalia, a dissecting-room, and an amphitheatre."

But what of the view-point of the sick? Are we not all, doctors and nurses, supposed to exist only for the sake of the patients? In this circular there is no mention anywhere of the patient. Even the surgical technique is taught, first, upon little helpless *animals*. Is not this a revolting thought? So to teach nurses, whose first attribute should be compassionate tenderness!

How does this strike the mind which, remembering the fears and the helplessness of illness, can recall the sharpness of the need for sympathy and tender understanding of the dire strait of the sick one?

Modern science has one tremendous fault. It is too prone to forget the individual. The whole profession of medicine may, to some extent, be reproached justly with having too little imagination where the patient as a human being is concerned, and the greatest peril to which modern nursing is exposed is of falling into this same pit through imitation, and of dropping off its own peculiar and choice endowment of womanly comfortingness. Nothing, I think, dear Editor, is more trying to one's toleration than to see men—most of whom never did and never can comprehend what a woman's work really is, what its details are, or how it ought to be done—undertaking to instruct and train women in some-

thing so unquestionably her own special field as nursing. I do not limit this statement to men only, but will say that physicians, be they men or women, cannot teach nursing, any more than nurses can teach medicine. Medicine and nursing are not the same; and however much we may learn from the physician about disease and its treatment, the whole field of nursing—as nursing is realized by the *patient* (the centre of the question)—is unknown to him. I agree that he can criticise nursing intelligently, but he cannot show how it ought to be done or do it himself, except in rare instances.

Florence Nightingale, who said everything that is fundamental and true, repeated this fact continually, and the experience of every good nurse ratifies it.

We need, then, to recognize those qualities and characteristics in our work which are superior to what men can teach us, and to hold firmly to them, refusing to give them up, and most unremittingly should we resist all attempts to take our right of teaching our own work out of our hands, putting nurses out of their true relation to their own calling, and bringing up a set of imperfect imitators of pseudo-scientific men, mere satellites of the medical profession, who will be neither doctor nor nurse.

I am, dear Editor, yours sincerely,

L. L. DOCK.

DEAR EDITOR: Having enjoyed the privilege of six delightfully interesting weeks at the Summer School in Philanthropic Work in New York, I want all nurses to know of this opportunity open to almost all of them.

The school is conducted by the Charity Organization Society of New York City, and the meetings are held in the library of the United Charities Building, 105 East Twenty-second Street, every weekday morning for six weeks in June and July.

Pupils are eligible to the school who have graduated from a college or university, or who have had one year's practical experience in some philanthropic work. A registration fee of ten dollars is required.

The whole expense for the six weeks, including board, can be covered with seventy-five dollars.

The object of the directors of the school is to give the members of the class a broad view of the existing charities of New York, allow them to listen to and become acquainted with some of the best practical workers in the different cities of the United States, and stimulate them with a desire for future study and investigation along the lines of their own particular work.

In order to do this, each pupil at the beginning of the course was given a subject, which he was to investigate particularly and upon which he was to write a report. This in itself necessitated visits to the institutions in New York connected with the subject, acquaintance with the managers, and a correspondence with like institutions in other cities.

The instructors were men and women who are actually leading and doing the practical work in Boston, New York, Philadelphia, Baltimore, Chicago, and Buffalo. Each one of them spoke from the depth of his own experience, and with a hopefulness and enthusiasm that could not but awaken a like feeling in the listeners.

In addition to the morning lectures, the school was taken to the various public institutions of New York,—almshouse, workhouse, jail, reformatories, va-

cation schools, floating hospital, etc.,—and after each visit the workings of the place were discussed, the good and bad points shown, and comparisons made between these institutions and like ones in the home cities of the members of the class.

The class this year numbered thirty-four. The members came from all parts of the country. All were thoroughly interested men and women, many of them practical workers of some experience themselves. The opportunity to become thoroughly acquainted with them was a privilege in itself.

Remembering how often in hospital work the question came up as to how to advise this patient or that patient as to what he should do to better his home conditions, how his motherless children should be best cared for, what he should do himself until he was able to work, and the numberless other questions which the friendly relationship of the nurse makes it possible for the patient to ask, and realizing as never before the intimate relationship of medical to all other charities, I feel that a nurse who is doing either hospital or district work could not do better than take this six-weeks' course.

ANNA E. RUTHERFORD,
301 North Charles Street, Baltimore, Md.

DEAR EDITOR: One of my inseparables on private duty is the little ice-pick which I carry about with me, and which is such a convenience I should not know what to do without it. It is a small, sharp steel pick, just two inches long, and with a small, round nickel head. It comes in a little paper box marked "Old Doctor's System," twenty-five cents. The largest blocks of ice can be dismembered with it without noise, and for chipping ice for ice-bags, etc., laid on a soft cloth, the process of breaking up the ice is quite noiseless. I carry it with me when specialling private patients in hospital, as one does not always find it even in well-equipped hospitals, and the sound of ice being pounded or cracked with a large pick is most annoying and unnecessary, especially at night.

"SPECIAL NURSE."

ANOTHER nurse writes: "Some time ago I learned a recipe for a patients' bath which I have found universally most acceptable to the sick one. Although a simple thing, I have never met another nurse who had learned it, and have given the recipe to many. As it conduces greatly to the pleasure and refreshment of the invalid, especially the chronic and incurable invalid, I thought it might be useful if I sent it to THE AMERICAN JOURNAL OF NURSING.

"To a basinful of warm or tepid water add a large handful of salt, coarse salt if it is obtainable, making a strong brine. Then add about a drachm each of aromatic spirits of ammonia and of spirits of camphor. The quantity, however, of these drugs may be increased or diminished according to the preference of the patient. An ounce of alcohol or some bay-rum may be added. This makes a mixture deliciously refreshing, tonic, and stimulating to the skin, and sedative in its general effects. My patients have always liked this so much for their sponge-bath that I hope some other nurses may find it helpful."

NORTON MEMORIAL INFIRMARY,

LOUISVILLE, KY., August 24, 1901.

DEAR MISS PALMER: A few weeks ago I wrote you in quest of a hospital position. With great promptness I received the address of two hospital vacancies. I wrote Miss Cartwright and received the appointment at the above-named infirmary. I like my position very much, and feel greatly indebted to you for your kindness, and take this opportunity of thanking you.

Yours, very sincerely,

HELEN KELLY.

To the Editor:

I wish to make a strong plea that the different *alumnæ* associations devote special attention to the subject of parliamentary law during the coming winter, so that the delegates sent to the next annual convention may be able to interpret any constitutional questions which may arise.

If the delegates to the Buffalo Convention had been familiar either with the constitution of the National Association or with parliamentary law I do not think it possible that the following quotation could have been construed to mean a Nominating Committee of three:

"(c) The Nominating Committee shall be formed thus:

"Immediately after adjournment of the morning session of the first day of the annual meeting, the delegates of all the *alumnæ* associations present shall be called together, and the delegate of each State and Province shall elect one member. Delegates present from isolated *alumnæ* associations shall unite together to elect a member or members according to their number, which proportion shall be fixed by the Executive Committee and the vice-presidents who are in charge of the isolated *alumnæ*.

"The members thus elected shall constitute the Nominating Committee."

Respectfully submitted,

A DELEGATE.

WE hope nurses in private practice will use this department freely in sending *practical* nursing notes from their own experience. As soon as warranted, a special department, called "Practical Points from the Private Nurse," will be opened.—Ed.

